

**Watertown Local Development Corporation**  
**May 6, 2021**  
**Meeting Minutes**

The Watertown Local Development Corporation Board of Directors monthly meeting was held on Thursday, May 6, 2021 via ZOOM

**Present** – President Jeff Smith, Michael Lumbis, Steve Hunt, Michael Pierce, Dave Zembiec, Melinda Gault, Marshal Wier

**Staff** – Donald Rutherford, CEO; Kylee McGrath, Executive Assistant

**Excused**- Charles Capone

**Call to Order** – Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

**Work Plan Discussion**- Mr. Rutherford stated the purpose of the meeting was to develop a work plan for the 2021 year and to discuss the future of the WLDC. Mayor Smith suggested if the city of Watertown builds the amphitheater the WLDC could work with Mr. Joseph Rich as a bridge financier to be able to bring in big entertainers. With roughly a 90 day turn around time from when the funds are disbursed to when the WLDC would receive the initial investment back it would be worth the investment. One big concert or comedian could potentially sell out all hotels in the county. People would not only be staying in the surrounding hotels they would be getting gas, eating at restaurants. Being a bridge financier would stick with the WLDC's mission statement since it would help with job retention. Mr. Rutherford stated he wanted to make sure this would not become a grant program. This would also promote mobile dining (food trucks). Mr. Weir stated that bringing in smaller acts such as comedians could produce a bigger impact since the budget would go further and be able to happen more frequent.

Mr. Rutherford stated Mr. Foy has been in contact with him about a performance arts center. Mr. Foy is interested in finding a location in downtown for his performing arts center. It would be a profit/not for profit business. This would also help with bring more culture into Watertown.

Mr. Pierce stated that lending will become difficult due to all the liquidity so the WLDC will need to look for other ways to generate income. It was stated that the WLDC should look into a part time marketing person if the WLDC is to become more involved in marketing projects like Thompson park, downtown Watertown etc.. Mr. Hunt stated that there are a lot of grants out there that are available, a grant writer would also be beneficial.

Mr. Rutherford stated he wanted the board to start thinking about a succession plan. He is looking to retire in approximately three years.

A second city center industrial park would be something to think about. The WLDC could build a staging access at the rail spur and charge a fee the current industrial park. Mr. Rutherford will work with Mr. Zembiec and Mr. Wier.

**Next Meeting** – The next meeting will be held on May 20, 2021

**Adjournment** – With no further discussion meeting adjourned at 3:26 p.m.